“The road is stony and filled with obstacles, but the journey is infinitely rewarding.”

CIS & Mongolia Geographical Group

Haifa, Israel, 24-27 December, 2007

CIS & Mongolia

- Current state of the Region
- Achievements. Learnings. Challenges
- Projected launch dates
- Strategies to go forward

Current state of the Region

Achievements - 1

1. 3-month cycles in 98% of priority clusters
2. Resource persons for expansion identified (80), trained (25) and utilized (53)
3. Most of the ABMs are becoming resource persons for Expansion
4. Experience of Intensive teaching campaigns with all constituents replicated in most of the priority clusters and resulted in significant breakthrough in the number of enrollments
5. Significantly increased number of believers using Anna’s presentation in teaching
6. Publication of teaching albums and other useful tools

Achievements - 2

7. Initial consolidation efforts during expansion phase (Yakutsk, Tashkent, Tbilisi, Mongolia) and immediately after it proved successful
8. Homefront pioneers settled in receptive neighborhood in 2 clusters
9. Unprecedented enrollment of junior youth in Baku (165 – one cycle)
10. Increased capacity to handle cases of severe opposition during teaching
11. Close collaboration among Counsellors in a complementary manner

Learning

1. Consolidation successful when started during Expansion phase and based on thorough planning
2. Learning, experiences, resources instantly shared across the Region leading to accelerated growth
3. International deployment of resource persons has increased their effectiveness in their own clusters
4. Utilization of short-term pioneers from Cradle of Faith has been mutually beneficial and should be continued
5. Orientation of resource persons through well-designed training creating sense of mission - the main factor for effective teaching campaigns in less advanced clusters
6. Launch of 3-month cycles and deployment of resource persons in less advanced clusters resulted in shift in mindset that shortens the road to IPG

Challenges-1

- Ensuring immediate consolidation during and following expansion in a systematic way
- Growing severe opposition (Central Asia, Azerbaijan)
- Increasing the ability of the tutors to accompany friends through the whole sequence, especially higher levels
- Increasing the ability to enrol new believers and seekers into intensive institute course
- Developing capacity of the Cluster Growth Committee and the facilitator to administer growth
- Sustaining large number of junior youth in the groups and reaching out to their parents
- Depending on a handful of capable believers in the cluster makes growth vulnerable

Challenges- 2

- Ensuring commitment to long-term action and understanding about coherence among various lines of action
- Identifying and mobilizing homefront pioneers to receptive neighbourhoods
- Devolving certain tasks of growth process onto the Local Spiritual Assemblies
- Low capacity at cluster level to collect, compile and use statistical information on regular basis

Criteria for IPG launching

- Book 7 graduates: 20
- Tutors: 10
- Animators: 5
- Children's class teachers: 5
- Participants in direct teaching activity: 20
- Basic capacity of cluster agencies to facilitate growth
- Minimum enrolments: 10 in previous cycles
- Experience in involving good percentage of new believers in the institute process
- Experience with all core activities

Projected launch dates- till Ridvan 2008

Dates	Feb 08	Mar 08	Apr 08	May 08
1-7		Samarkand Uz	Uliastai Mn	
8-14	Seminar Bishkek Kg Launch		Tbilisi Ge Toson. Mn	
15-21			Kazan Ru Novosib. Ru Khovd Mn Sumgayit Az Batumi Ge	Baganuur Mn
22-30		St.Peters. Ru Darkhan Mn Navoi Uz	Karaganda Kz Dushanbe Tj	Yakutsk Ru

Projected launch dates- till Ridvan 2011

Area	Ridvan 09	Ridvan 10	Ridvan 11
Caucasus	Yerevan	Rustavi, Telavi, Sabunchi	Aragatsutn, Shuakhevi, Nakhchivan
Central Asia	Astana, Kokshetau, Temirtau	Taldy-Kurgan, Petropavlovsk, Uralsk, Jizzakh, Dinau, Shymkent, Mary	Qarshi, Kanibadam, Osh, Tokmok, Ashqabad
Mongolia	Yesonbulag, Sukhbaatar, Choibalsan, Tsetserleg	Dalanzadgad, Erdenet	
Russia	Vladivostok, Chita, Krasnoyarsk	Tobolsk, Krasnodar, Angarsk, Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk	Perm, Khabarovsk, Selenginsk
Total	11	16	11

Key Strategies to go forward - Current 11 IPGs

- Strengthen capacity of cluster agencies to administer expansion and consolidation
- Utilize various types of resource persons (expansion, consolidation, junior youth, etc.)
- Identify receptive neighbourhoods and settle homefront pioneers to establish community-building process
- Utilize international short-term pioneers
- Establish Learning sites for JYSEP (Khujand, Murun, Baku)
- Establish learning sites for Expansion/Consolidation (Bishkek, Almaty, Novosibirsk, Baku)

Key Strategies for 4 months- Clusters Launching 15 IPGs by Ridvan 08

- Identify, train, utilize resource persons for expansion and consolidation for 17 clusters
  - Seminar in Bishkek, 8-10 February 2008
  - 2-week mobilization of RP for expansion
  - 7-10-day mobilization of RP for consolidation
- Active refresher courses for tutors, animators, CC teachers, on Book 6 in the clusters
- Establish Cluster Growth Committee
- Train cluster agencies in basic skills of administering growth, e.g. statistics, reflection meeting organization, planning campaigns, provision of literature, budgeting, etc.
- Identify and empower 1-2 local friends, potential resource persons

Key Strategies to go forward- Clusters Launching 40 IPG by Ridvan 11

- Continue utilizing resource persons for expansion and consolidation to help the clusters to work in 3-month cycles
- Settle homefront and international pioneers
- Identify and train 1-2 local friends as potential resource persons
- Continue inviting friends to advanced cluster for intensive courses and expansion phase activities
- Continue sending visiting tutors to build the pyramid of human resources

Key Strategies- Consolidation

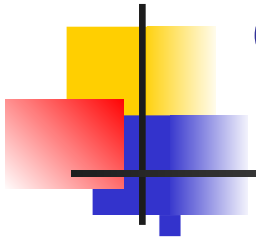
"Let him not be content until he has infused into his spiritual child so deep a longing as to impel him to arise independently, in his turn, and devote his energies to the quickening of other souls, and the upholding of the laws and principles laid down by his newly adopted Faith."

Shoghi Effendi

Consolidation

- Consolidation starts within expansion phase
- Consolidate all interested, enrolled or not
- Not to leave the new believer or seeker even for one day
- Assign for each person someone who can accompany
- Consolidation in 2 stages

Consolidation- Stage 1 (to be completed within 1 month after expansion phase)



- Establish friendship and loving relationship
- Pray daily for each of new believers and seekers
- Invite to Ruhi 1 and start immediately
- If not possible to start Ruhi 1, start sharing deepening themes
- Help them to start teaching their own family and contacts
- Invite them to attend a community event: unity feast, Holy Days in the neighbourhood
- Show video materials (Building Momentum)
- Give audio, portrait of Abdul-Baha or Holy Places
- Use art, teach Baha'i prayers and songs
- Engage them in service project for larger community

Consolidation- Stage 2

Systematically accompany emerging 2 categories of people:

Category 1. Those proceeding further after Book 1 through sequence of courses

- Improve quality of tutoring of each course
- Increase the number of tutors able to accompany a group from Book 1 to 7
- Ensure doing practice component for each course
- Help tutors to accompany the participants in the initial acts of service (see checklist)

Category 2. Those who did not continue sequence of courses, and need to be integrated into community life and nurtured by those in Category 1

Consolidation- Stage 2

Strategies for Category 2- assign someone from Bk 2 graduates to:

- Establish friendship and loving relationship
- Visit them regularly (at least once in quarter) to continue deepening, share news, say prayers together, discuss their teaching efforts, distribute newsletter, books, audio-visual materials, etc.
- Encourage and help in individual teaching
- Invite to participate in teaching projects
- Invite to institute courses and core activities
- Invite to 19 Day Feasts, Holy Days, etc.
- Give information on pilgrimage and invite to apply
- Share status of the Fund, give information about the channels they can use to contribute, share about Huququllah
- Regularly supply with teaching aids, other books, materials and items of Baha'i identity
- Regularly update their contact information

Guidance and comments by members of House of Justice and Teaching Centre-1

<u>Work of Geographic Group for CIS & Mongolia</u>

- Close collaboration between the 4 Counsellors commended
- The House of Justice happy with recent breakthrough in enrolments in Russia
- Personal involvement of Counsellors in training, mobilizing and following up with resource persons- instrumental for success

Guidance and comments by members of House of Justice and Teaching Centre-2

Expansion and Teaching:

- Avoid rigid criteria who should be accepted as new believers. Letter to NSA Russia expected
- No polarisation regarding the concept of door-to-door teaching. Different clusters may require different strategies for teaching
- Teaching is a process and direct teaching is part of this process
- ‘Door-to-door’ is not a teaching method, but a method of making a contact. For making a contact, numerous ways and approaches may exist

Guidance and comments by members of House of Justice and Teaching Centre-3

Consolidation:

- Careful consideration of the consolidation process in 2 stages commended
- In Consolidation Stage 2 keep in mind some people in Category 2 should eventually move to Category 1 when they are continually invited to sequence of courses
- Important to keep in mind that teaching by itself is strong consolidating factor for new believers and seekers
- For working with Category 2, a network of mentors to be raised
- Too much effort on Category 2- might go back to the old times.
- Priority is still raising human resources (Category 1), Category 1 takes care of Category 2

Guidance and comments by members of House of Justice and Teaching Centre-4

Other matters:

- Concerns about growing opposition, especially in the face of renewed growth, be wise in using door-to-door approach
- Maturation of Regional Councils is crucial
- Situation of the Faith in Armenia
- Working with Assistants
- Include Board members in the training of resource persons
- Short-term pioneers from Cradle- continue practice

“The more we do, the more we learn”